Mississippi Normal College

SUGGESTIONS FOR RURAL TEACHERS

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SUGGESTIONS

FOR

Rural Teachers.

The following suggestions are offered with the hope that they may be of practical service to young teachers in rural schools. Teachers who have attended the Mississippi Normal College will be expected to make a report to the college at the end of each session, giving an outline of their work along these and similar lines. It is not expected that a teacher shall attempt to put all these suggestions into operation at one time. Nor should any teacher be content to try these plans only. Many teachers have found it profitable to select some particular line of activity on which to concentrate for the session, and another for the next year. In this way much more can be accomplished than by attempting too much at once.

But it is very important that each teacher do something outside of text book work. The initiative, tact, and perseverance necessary to the working out of these plans will largely determine the success or failure of the rural school teacher, at least as a factor in that broader community life which the Normal College is striving to promote.

If more detailed suggestions are desired, the members of the Normal College Faculty will take pleasure in rendering every service possible.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS.

In order to carry out the Normal College idea of making the school the centre of community interests it will be necessary to have community meetings at stated intervals. These meetings may be unorganized, or they may be in the form of organized associations, such as the School Improvement or Parent-Teachers Associations. In this, as in nearly all social movements, organization will bring best results, but it is important that all meetings should be open to the entire community.

School Improvement Association.

This is the name of an organization that has accomplished great good in this state. There is a state organization, with subordinate county and community branches, with constitution and by-laws to control every feature of the work. If you wish to organize your community forces under this name, write to Miss Susie V. Powell, Jackson, Miss. She will either send you the necessary literature or tell you where it can be obtained.

In the meetings of this association do not limit your interests to

school problems. Whatever meets your community needs should be planned for. Study questions relating to agriculture, domestic science, industrial club work, hygiene (personal, school or public), school problems of support and co-operation, social entertainments, etc. Indeed, the scope of this work includes everything pertaining to school and community welfare. What you want is a getting together for inspiration, sociability and discussion. Get outside speakers, occasionally, to talk on country problems, but above all else see to it that the parents enter into these discussions of the things that pertain to the community good.

Parent-Teachers Association.

This organization is very similar to the S. I. A. It also has a state organization, with subordinate branches, all under a uniform constitution and by-laws. The state president for 1915 is Mrs. J. B. Lawrence, Jackson, Miss. If you wish to organize a local P. T. A., address the State President, or write to the President of the Parent-Teachers Asociation at the Normal College. From either source you can obtain literature that will give all the information needed.

The purposes of this organization may be stated as follows: (1). To establish a closer relationship between the home and the school in order that parent and teacher may work together more intelligently in the education of the child. (2). To make the whole community feel a sense of duty and responsibility to its children.

Local organizations for these same purposes are sometimes called Mothers Clubs, but the name Parent-Teachers Association seems to suit better.

The local P. T. A. can help the school in a very practical way as well as in the broader results that must follow. Some of them have provided pictures, flowers and other means of decorating the school room; others have furnished needed apparatus in the way of maps and charts; others have secured equipment for the play-ground; still others have added needed books for the library.

A common mistake of young teachers is to attempt to bring to pass all needed improvements and reforms by their own efforts alone. Even if the same degree of success could thus be obtained, it would be far better to have the various members of the community assist in the work and feel that quickening of pride and interest that always accompanies such effort.

This touches the very secret of community development and uplift.

Among other things, the meetings of either of the above associations may discuss such topics as: (1). Home study for pupils, (2). Questions of hygiene and sanitation. (3). School lunches. (4). The

educative value of play. (5). Importance and means of securing punctual and regular attendance of children. (6). Credit for work done at home by the pupils.

These organizations can also assist in cultivating and directing public sentiment in the community with reference to extension of school terms, consolidation of schools, organization of industrial clubs among boys and girls.

Farmers Union.

Up to this time there has been no very close relation between this organization and the rural school. As a matter of fact, there should be the closest bond of sympathy and co-operation between them. Each ought to help the other, and both work together for the uplift of the community.

We suggest that each rural teacher could not do better than to join the local Farmers Union and take an enthusiastic and helpful part in its work.

Church and Sunday School.

There can never be any union between church and state in this country, and this is fortunate, both for the church and for state. But this does not mean that there should not be co-operation between the efforts and activities of local churches and schools. It is coming more and more to be recognized that these are but two separate agencies working to the same general end,—the physical, mental and spiritual improvement of the units that compose society. Both agencies seek to begin with the child, but neither should be content to stop there, but should follow him through every stage of his life.

The school needs the church and Sunday School and the church and Sunday School need the day school. It should therefore be the ambition of every teacher to serve the community as fully as possible in the local Sunday School and church.

SCHOOL MEETINGS.

In addition to the community meetings mentioned above, there should be school meetings in which the children themselves are the chief participants. Not that these meetings are not for the entire community. On the contrary, they are more nearly for the entire community than the ones discussed above. Under this head will come the usual school entertainments in which the children take part in a program. There are also the spelling bee, the debating society, the story tellers league, school displays or exhibits of work done by the pupils, etc.

Children need incentives. Group incentives are the best. They need a definite social end to work for, and entertainments can be made one of the most educative features of school work.

Story Tellers League.

There is a national organization of this name and the purpose of it is to acquaint children with some of our best literature and to train them in expression. The work of this organization is best suited to children of the fifth and sixth grades.

It is not necessary, of course, to organize under the auspices of the national league, but if this is desired it would be well to address the President of the Story Tellers League of the Normal College. Explanatory literature will be sent to those who are interested.

The simplest and quickest way to get results in this line is to have the pupils meet and select officers and committees, assign certain pupils to duty for the next meeting, and begin at once the real work of story-telling. If you have not tried this, you will be astonished and gratified to note the interest and enthusiasm with which these children will enter into this fascinating work of combining memory, imagination and expression. After a short period of practice, this work can be used to assist in the programs of the S. I. A., the P.-T. A., or any other general community meetings.

The following books will supply source-material for good stories: Flora J. Cook's Nature Myths, (A. Flanagan, Chicago), How to Tell Stories, (Houghton Mifflin), Fifty Famous Stories, (American Book Co.), Hawthorne's Wonder Book, (Macmillan Co.), Grimm's Fairy Tales (Chas. Merrill Co.), In Fableland, (Silver Burdette), Indian Legends of Mississipi, (McClurg Co).

Displays of School Work.

At each entertainment display work is in order. The interest of the parents can be secured much more easily through this concrete evidence of what the child is doing than by any other means. The reaction in increased incentive on the part of the child is also very valuable.

This display work can consist of specimens of penmanship, composition papers, illustrated stories, drawings, crayon work, maps, hand work done in connection with lessons, sand table problems, nature collections of native tree parts, seeds, weeds, flowers, rocks, etc.; work done in manual training, sewing, cooking, work done in co-operation with the home in the "School credit for home work" plan, etc.

Invitations to parents should be issued by the pupils. These, with written explanations to be attached to the work, will furnish good practice in language, be an incentive to pupils, and will win the interest and attendance of parents. The practice in arrangement of this work will give rise to problems in art study and may be made the basis for study in home decoration.

By having the students act as hosts and monitors in presenting and explaining the work to visitors many social virtues and graces

can be cultivated. On these occasions the school's behavior can be tested in a real social situation.

These displays are often had in connection with district or county field day programs and on commencement occasions, but they should not be reserved for such occasions only; their best value will be secured by having them at frequent intervals during the school session.

It adds to individual and community interest to have inexpensive prizes awarded to the best specimens in these exhibits.

PLAY-GROUND ACTIVITIES.

Play is a natural and necessary expression of the child's nature, and not only furnishes recreation and healthful physical exercise but has decided educative value in several other respects. It provides for excellent moral and social training; it can be made to teach self-control, obedience to rules, and respect for the rights of others. Certain games, such as town ball, cultivate judgment and quick thinking. Other games, such as "Going to Jerusalem," are good to train the attention and cultivate memory.

Supervision in play is very necessary. Children of the primary grades like for the teacher to play with them; those of the intermediate grades want her to look on but not take part.

The study of play-ground activities is as important as lesson asignment and teaching.

Two books that are very helpful in selecting suitable games for children of different grades are: "Games for Play-ground, Home and School" by Bancroft, (Macmillan Co.), and "Education through Games and Plays" by Johnson, (Ginn & Co.)

The community should see to it that the play-ground is supplied with suitable apparatus for play, such as swings, teter-boards, etc. With the material provided at a small expense, the older boys of the school can usually construct this apparatus.

Contests in Athletic Sports.

In order to give life and interest to play-ground activity it is important to organize the sports of both boys and girls and have frequent competitive contests. There should be planned a series of contests between rival teams of the school, and these should culminate in inter-school contests with neighboring schools, then with district or beat contests, and finally with county field day contests. The value of these contests cannot be overestimated, but it is as possible to overdo this feature of school work as it is to go to excess in any other good thing. Nothing can prevent this but that proverbial saving grain of common-sense that is so necessary in everything that is worth while.

The following list will give an idea of the variety of contests that can be provided, but it will be well to remember that sports and

games have their seasons, and that no teacher can hope to succeed in these matters without proper regard for this fact.

Contests for Boys.

Under the head of games may be mentioned the following: Foot-ball, Basket ball, Base ball, Volley ball, and Tennis.

Track events may include: Mile race, Half-mile race, 440 yard dash, 220 yard dash, 100 yard dash, 50 yard dash, Low hurdles, High hurdles, Running broad jump, Running high jump, Standing broad jump, Standing high jump, Pole Vault, Shot put, Hammer throw, Discus throw, and Relay race.

Contests for Girls.

Games: Basket ball, Town ball, Tennis, and Volley ball.
Track events: 50 yard dash.

General Contests.

Egg race, Potato race, Sack race, Walking race, Tug-o-war, and Barrel race.

INDUSTRIAL CLUBS.

Nothing in recent years has so taken hold of the interest of the people as that of the boys' and girls' industrial club work. Nor has anything ever been undertaken that has greater educative and social value, nor more direct influence on the future prosperity of this nation. Every teacher in a rural school should lose no time in getting into this game. The movement is past the stage of criticism now, and is no longer called a fad. It not only has the backing of the federal government, but is approved and fostered by state governments and by every department of education that has to do with rural schools.

We can attempt here only a very brief outline of some of this work. If this is not definite enough or extended enough to enable you to make a start, then write any or all of the following for further information:

Department of Agriculture, Mississippi Normal College.
Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.
Department of Agriculture, Agricultural College, Miss.
Department of Education, Jackson, Miss.

Egg Clubs.

These clubs are mentioned first because it is easy to organize them, the material is already at hand in every farm-yard, there is a ready market and constant demand for the product all-the-year-round The two most important points to be emphasized are (1) an absolute guarantee that the eggs are fresh when they reach the consumer, (2) a reliable marketing contract.

The first thing to do is to have the pupils organize, elect officers,

adopt constitution and by-laws covering rules by which the business is to be conducted. In this there will be provided a pledge that each member must sign, with reference to furnishing fresh eggs only. Each member is given a number which must be placed on each egg furnished by that member. This number is placed on the egg with pen and ink, or preferably by use of a rubber stamp. It is not a bad idea to include also the date on which the egg was laid. If a customer finds one of these eggs spoiled he reports the number to the club manager or secretary and the member who has this number is punished by being suspended from the club. It is found necessary to enforce this rule rigidly, as it is not possible otherwise to insure good eggs, and without this the marketing end of the business will fall down.

The eggs are brought to the school by the children every day (or at least twice each week, on stated days), are there carefully packed in shipping cases, under the direct supervision of the teacher. These cases can be obtained at a small cost and are used over and over for almost an unlimited number of shippings, being returned by the customer by parcels past after each shipment.

The eggs are shipped by parcels post, direct to the customer. The postage will vary according to distance, if beyond first zone, but this cost seldom exceeds two cents per dozen eggs.

The marketing arrangement must be made by the teacher. It must be definite as to time of delivery, quantity, and price. The larger the quantity for any one customer, the better, of course. But the small customer is not to be despised, since the cost of transportation is not much greater per dozen on small shipments than on large. The price of guaranteed eggs is always higher than for others. This difference should not be less than five cents per dozen.

Canning Clubs.

Girls' tomato clubs are the most conspicuous examples of organized canning clubs. It is difficult to understand why this work should be confined to girls, but such has been the custom up to this time. This movement has now become so general that it is not deemed necessary to go into a general discussion of the merits of the work nor a detailed explanation of how these clubs are organized and conducted. If your county is organized in this work, you can obtain all necessary information from the county director. Otherwise, it would be well to address Miss Susie V. Powell, State Organizer of Girls' Clubs, Jackson, Miss.

We have had several girls in the Normal College who paid most of their expenses with the money which they made in tomato club work. Some of these girls are now drawing good salaries as county directors of girls' club work.

Corn Clubs.

These boys' clubs are now so numerous and have become so pop-

ular in this state that it is not thought necessary to give space here to a discussion of their history. We take it for granted that every rural teacher realizes the importance of this movement, and will see to it that the boys of his (or her) community have the benefit of taking part in these clubs and their contests. It is so easy to put this work into operation, and the beneficial results are so great, both for the individual and for the community, that we deem it inexcusable for any rural teacher to neglect to organize a club if this has not already been done.

If there is no county demonstrator or agent, write to Mr. C. A. Cobb, Agricultural College, Miss. He will give you all needed information, and may be able to visit your club. Free bulletins on this work may also be obtained from the department of agriculture at Washington, D. C.

Pig Clubs.

These clubs are not as yet so popular as corn clubs, but they are coming more into favor every day. They offer a fine opportunity for the rural teacher to begin a movement in his community that will do much toward offsetting the evils of the boll weevil. The concrete lessons taught by these industrial clubs are more convincing to the farmer than all the books and lectures with which you can bombard him.

The club should be organized with proper officers, constitution and by-laws. One of the rules imposes the condition that each member shall have a pig of certain age (between specified limits on a given date) which he pledges himself to care for for a certain number of months, keeping accurate record as to kind of feed, quantity of feed, cost, etc.

At the close of the contest all the pigs are collected at one point and judged by some competent authority, according to the points specified in the rules governing the contest. The place of judging may be the county fair, the county trades-day, or a special community meeting at the school for this purpose.

In order to stimulate interest in these contests it is usual to have public spirited business men and others, or commercial clubs, or boards of supervisors, to offer prizes for the best pig grown under the conditions of the contest. This plan is also used in the contests connected with various other club work for boys and girls.

Calf Clubs.

These are sometimes called "Baby Beef Clubs." One of the first to be organized in this state, so far as we are informed, was one in Covington County under the direction of County Superintendent Bura Hilbun. If you are interested in this particular movement it would be well to write him, and also the department of agriculture at Washington. What has been said of pig clubs will apply with equal force to

calf or beef clubs. Either kind of club will be entirely in order in any rural community in Mississippi, and the rural teacher is the logical person to inaugurate the movement.

There is no reason why the boys of a county or a given community should not be organized into "Colt Clubs," as well as pig and calf clubs. The same reasons that apply to one will apply to the other, and there can certainly be no question as to the benefits to be derived from all of these movements for organized, competitive effort on the part of those who are to be the men of the near future—the very men on whom will rest the responsibility for the future prosperity of our state and nation.

In all this club work it is important that there be real organization, system, accurate book-keeping on the part of each member and each officer, and detailed reports at the end of the season or at the close of the contest. The educative value will depend largely on the faithfulness with which these points are observed.

SCHOOL CREDIT FOR HOME WORK.

The plan of giving school credit for satisfactory performance of home duties is comparatively new, but it is becoming popular throughout the country, not only in rural schools, but in city systems and even in colleges. In a certain western university, a certain amount of credit is given in hygiene to those students who sleep with wide open windows the year-round. In an eastern city high school credit is given in domestic science to those girls who present proper evidence that they have prformed a regular stated amount of work each day in house-keeping or cooking.

The school,—the rural school especially,—is so burdened with literary class work that but little time can be found for industrial activity. And yet the country child's life is full of just this kind of activity at home. With just a little encouragement and supervision this work can be made more educative to him than much of the text-book work he does. There is at least no conflict between these two kinds of educative activity, and common sense dictates that both should be so used as to bring the greatest good to the child.

Arrange a plan for giving the child credit for thoughtful performance of home duties. What you give credit for is your problem. How you manage to get a check on this work is also your problem. But this ought not to be difficult. If this problem results in your visiting each home, all the better. If it results in more frequent conference and discussion with the parents as to disposition and characteristics of the various children, still better.

Cultivate an interest in the daily activities of the child. Make this a part of school work and it gives you an entering wedge, a legitimate interest when once started. Seek the co-operation of the parents in judging this home work.

Some teachers give credit for home work, as for studies, and use the home work marks in averaging up the total standing. Others make a contest of it, giving holidays for rewards. Some give prizes. Some use the county and state fairs as a place for exhibiting the results of this work. Each teacher should decide what is most needed and begin with this, without waiting to develop a complete plan. The general plan will probably develop itself. But the important thing is to make a beginning.

Credit may be given for any home task, such as building the fire in the morning, milking a cow, cleaning out the barn, splitting and carrying in wood, gathering eggs, wiping dishes, tending flowers, sweeping floors, getting to bed by a certain hour, brushing one's teeth each morning, feeding chickens, caring for pigs, cows, horses, etc. It can be given, also for cultivating kitchen gardens, or helping mother with the sewing and mending.

MANUAL TRAINING AND DOMESTIC SCIENCE IN THE COUNTRY SCHOOL.

Very few people deny the importance of teaching these branches in the country school, but the excuse is always offered that "we have no equipment." This comes from the erroneous idea that manual training is a science or fine art. The fact is that the manual training of the school is neither. It is true that everything in manual training is based on scientific principles, but so is sweeping a floor, for that matter.

A shop with benches made by the boys and with the following tools will make a sufficient beginning for any rural school: A vise, hack saw, jack plane, block plane, try-square, 1-in. chisel, ¼-in. chisel, a rule for each student, also a rip saw, a cross cut saw, square, brace, bits, hammer, mallet, screw driver and oil stone. It is important, however, to have a copboard or large box in which these tools can be kept locked when not in use. It is possible to get along with even fewer tools than these and still do fairly good work and keep many boys in school who would otherwise drop out.

A certain amount of training in the use of tools is necessary to every man. This is particularly true of the man who is to make his living on the farm. But even aside from this practical value, the educative value of this work is very great and will have fine effect on character.

The work can be made useful in improving conditions in and around the school building. Every school needs many things that will make the school work easier and pleasanter and the surroundings more attractive. The manual training pupils may make walks, window boxes, book-cases, cupboards, sand-tables, etc. They may also repair desks, windows, doors, locks, fences.

Even if no equipment can be obtained for the school manual training department, this subject may be encouraged and many good results obtained by giving school credit for home work with tools. There are tools in nearly every home, and most boys learn to use them with some degree of skill, without being conscious of the educative value, or even connecting it in their minds with "school manual training." Giving school credit for such work as building a walk, chicken coop, fence, pantry shelves and other conveniences for the home, would increase the boy's respect for the dignity of such labor and would help to connect up his school life with his real life at home.

Enlisting the aid of the parents in estimating the amount of time put in on this work and the value of the results, will increase the interest of the parents in the work of the school. If the home work is of such nature that it can be brought to the school when completed it should be placed on exhibition and in some instances prizes might be offered for the best specimens of such work.

In this connction, it is very important that all competitive work, whether it be in corn clubs, pig clubs, manual training, or in literary effort, shall be so inspected, supervised, and tested as to guard against all possibility of fraud. One instance of fraud, in which the pupil is given credit for work done by parent or other interested party, will offset the good results of the entire plan. Such fraud will not only do permanent injury to the character of the pupil involved, but will react against the character and reputation of every member of the school.

Much that has been said concerning manual training will apply with equal force to domestic science and art. Domestic science can be undertaken with either sewing or cooking, together with correlation work. Sewing can easily be put in any school, since very little equipment is needed. Certainly every girl should be taught to make her own clothes and also how to select them. This course should consist of useful, practical garments, rather than of useless articles. The cost of each article should be kept by the pupil in a book for this purpose, and at the close of the session there should be a display of the articles made by the girls.

In cookery, it will be impossible to do actual cooking of food without equipment. But it is a mistake to suppose that an expensive outfit is necessary. A blue-flame oil stove, with oven, and an assortment of ordinary cooking utensils will not cost very much and the value to the community will be beyond estimate.

If this equipment can be had, the teacher who understands domestic science can do wonders, even with a few lessons each week, and these after school hours. Usually there will be found at least one girl in the school who is naturally a good cook and has had good training at home. With a little special coaching this girl can become

a useful assistant in this branch, and incidentally derive great benefit herself from this experience.

As soon as the class has learned enough of the principles and acquired some skill it will be well to give a dinner or luncheon and invite the trustees. This will give opportunity to teach serving, table decoration, etc. The teacher should plan for the student to do the same cooking at home that is given at school, and a system of school credit for home work should be worked out.

Even if no equipment can be obtained at first, it will be well for each teacher who has taken a domestic science course to have a class in the principles of cokery, food values, etc., and do some experimenting along the line of having the actual cooking done at home, according to the principles learned at school. With proper note books, showing every detail of the work, it is probable that very creditable results might be obtained in this way.

PRACTICAL HEALTH EDUCATION.

The plan of teaching physiology, hygiene and sanitation at one stated time in a child's life, and leaving it out of his education entirely if he should drop out of school before he reaches the grade in which this subject is taught is so absurd that it needs only to be mentioned to be rejected.

The time to begin teaching a child habits of hygiene and sanitation is when it is first old enough to be taught anything. The time to cease impressing these principles on him is when he ceases to be a factor in human society.

The principles involved in hygiene teaching should be related to the individual, the home and the community. This teaching should inculcate in the pupil the desire to contribute to healthful and successful living. It should tend to make of him an ideal citizen, with a well body and the ability to contribute to the public good. A child cannot be made healthy by hygienic instruction and healthy living for the few hours he is in school each day, unless his many hours at home can be made to accord with this.

It is therefore the problem of the school to get a correct view of the home environment and by some means gradually bring about an improvement in these conditions until they are in harmony with what the child is taught at school in the way of hygiene and sanitation.

Through the various kinds of community meetings suggested above the teacher will find opportunity to have round table discussions with the parents concerning the principles of correct living and conservation of vital forces. The teacher needs the help the parents can bring to these conferences, and the parents needs especially to know that health is not simply the absence of disease.

The attitude of the child, and incidentally of the parent, toward the teaching of hygiene can be rendered sympathetic by giving school

credit for home work in hygiene, such as regular brushing of teeth, proper bed-making, keeping the hands and nails clean, sleeping with windows open, preventing the breeding of flies and mosquitoes, protecting food against same, or the wholesale destruction of these pests.

It would be well for each teacher to prepare a questionnaire, covering every point of importance with reference to the child's surroundings and habits of living at home. This would include such questions as number of brothers and sisters living, number dead, health of each, health of parents, how many sleep in the same room, whether with windows open or not, whether vaccinated or not, condition of teeth, etc.

It will be necessary to use tact in securing this information, as parents are often sensitive about these matters and regard them as strictly personal and private. Lack of tact in such cases would render the teacher unpopular with these patrons and thus close the very door through which he seeks to enter in order that he may be of service.

The inspection of teeth can be done by the teacher at school, and a careful record made of each case. This, also should be done with great tact, in order to avoid offending the parents.

Emergency Kit for Rural School.

Every rural school should have the following articles at hand, in a suitable box or cupboard which can be kept locked, but easily accessible:

1. 4 ounces turpentine.
2. 1 ounce oil of cloves.
3. ¼ pound absorbent cotton (in package).
4. ½ dozen 2-inch gauze bandages.
5. 1 roll 1-inch adhesive bandages.
6. One dozen small towels.
7. Small basin or tin pan.
8. Aromatic spirits ammonia, 4 ounces. (½ teaspoonful in four tablespoonfuls water for cramps, nausea and headache, or when a person regains consciousness after fainting.)
9. Pair small scissors.
10. Needle and thread.
11. Pins (safety and straight).
12. 5 yards clean white cheesecloth to be used next to wounds (cut into small pieces).
13. Graduated (marked) medicine glass or teaspoon.
14. 6 ounces of 4 per cent. Boracic acid solution.
15. Tincture Iodine to put into an open cut to prevent infection.
16. Bicarbonate of soda (cooking soda), for burns.
17. Table salt.
18. A generous supply of common sense and self control.

SCHOOL GARDENS.

The country school may be handicapped in some respects, but in the matter of school gardens its opportunities are unlimited. In this particular it has the advantage over all other classes of schools, and yet it is rather the exception than the rule to find a school in the country with either a kitchen garden or a flower garden.

Whatever argument may be advanced in favor of manual training, domestic science, etc., will apply with double force to the school garden. These arguments are too numerous to mention in this limited space and it is not deemed necessary to present them for the reason that every teacher who has given the matter any thought will admit the value of this form of manual training. The trouble lies in making a begining. Each teacher seems to think that the school garden is impossible in his case because there is no fence, or else the soil is too poor near the school house, or there is not enough room to spare for this purpose.

The thing to do is to make a beginning, no matter how small it may be. It may be that the smaller the better, for all enterprises of this kind must grow as we learn how. Make an enclosure, 10 by 20 feet will serve, and get some of the boys to haul a load of well-rotted stable manure and another of leaf-mold. Then let the children help you decide (from your government bulletins and seed catalogues) what should be planted, how much of each, when, how. Do not omit the flowers. Do not let that "bad" boy do all the work. He will insist on this if you let him, but give him just enough to keep him interested and out of mischief. (Do not give him any part in this if you want him to keep his reputation for being the bad boy of the school).

Plant some peach and pecan seeds and teach budding and grafting. Keep careful records of everything that is done and have pupils do the same.

When you have tried this school garden one season, sit down and see if you can puzzle out how you ever managed without this adjunct to your teaching.

ARBOR DAY.

Judging by the number of country schools that are without shade, there seems to be an idea that country children have had so much of this particular blessing that they will welcome a change. A little closer observation will disclose the fact, however, that many of these children come from homes that have little or no shade. It is true that there are acres of trees on the farm, but in many instances they are not available for shade, nor valued except for the amount of firewood or fence-rails that they will produce.

The celebration of arbor-day each year will not only serve to supply the school yard with the shade and beauty that is so much needed, but will give an opportunity to impress upon the children and the

parents the importance of forest conservation, the relation of forests to rainfall, cyclones, etc., and the industrial crime that has been committed in the timber waste and forest destruction that has been going on throughout our country all these years.

LIBRARIES.

The country school is the very place where school libraries are most needed. In the towns and cities the homes contain books, as a rule, and neighbors are so close that books can be borrowed conveniently. There are also many of these communities in which there is some kind of public library. Not so in the country. Very few country homes have an assortment of books suitable for children, nor do they have many magazines and periodicals. The result is that the country child is taught to read and then left without anything to read.

The responsibility in this matter rests on the teacher of the rural school. Books are very cheap, and a small number will serve a great number of people.

If there is no library in your school, get one. If you cannot get a large one, get a small one. If you have no book-case, make one, or else get a box that will serve. (Be sure that it can be locked).

There is a state law providing for an appropriation of $10 from the county school fund for each rural school that will raise the same amount from other sources. Take advantage of this law and claim the ten dollars from the county.

After you get the books, teach the children how to use them to the best advantage.

Whatever you do, avoid buying books from the traveling agent who tempts you with the installment plan (and makes from 40 to 60 per cent as his commission).

RURAL ECONOMICS.

Every rural teacher has an ideal opportunity to teach rural economics, not only to his pupils in the school but to every member of the community. This teaching should not be done from a text-book, but in conversation, by round-table discussions in community meetings, by assignment of topics for investigation and report, by collecting statistics and comparing conditions that exist in that community with those better conditions that are found in some others.

We suggest that no more interesting or important work can be undertaken than that of making an industrial survey of your community. To one pupil might be assigned the duty of making a report (approximately correct) on the number of acres of land in cultivation, the number in pasture, the number in timber, the number in stumps. Later, an estimate could be made as to the value of these various classes of land from an income standpoint. A comparison

might then be made between this land and that in some other community more favorably, or less favorably located. It might be well to compare also the value on an income basis with the assessed value. Study also the effect of increase in fertility on value, and also the effect of good roads on value.

One line of research might cover the number of mules, horses, cows, beef-cattle, hogs, etc., on each farm; the average number of these different kinds of animals per acre; per man; etc. These figures should show the kind of stock, as to breed and an interesting computation might be made as to the number of dollars increase in income-value a change to a better breed would cause.

Another interesting line of investigation would be that of ascertaining the conditions in the community with reference to home conveniences and comforts, such as water works, for instance. This report might include the number of homes using wells, the average depth of well, the average distance of the well from the house, the means of drawing and conveying the water; the number of homes supplied by springs, the average distance of these from the house, the number of feet "climb" necessary to bring the water to the kitchen, the number of bucketfuls used per day; the number of homes with bath-room arrangements; the number of homes that are painted; the number that are screened; the number that are ceiled inside; the number that have only one room supplied with heat in winter.

So, along many other lines these investigations may be carried on, the results being tabulated and compared in each case so as to be usable in pointing out the way for improvement.

By way of caution, we will state again that the teacher must be very tactful in collecting this data. No matter how sensible the people of your community may be, they are human and their personal rights and feelings must be respected. They will resent, and should resent, impertinent meddling in their personal affairs. You must convince them of your sympathetic interest and unselfish desire to co-operate with them in bringing about better conditions of living. When you do this, they will co-operate with you. Until you do this you are not a success as a rural teacher, nor will you succeed as a teacher elsewhere.

In the matter of water works for rural homes, the President of the Normal College has compiled a bulletin that will be helpful to any one who contemplates putting in a system. A postal card request will secure a copy of this bulletin by return mail (or any number of copies that can be used in the community).

The Normal College is also planning to issue a bulletin on rural economics, with blank forms to be used in collecting data in these industrial surveys.

COMMUNITY CLUBS.

What the Commercial Club or Board of Trade is to the city or town, the Community Club can be to the rural community. This club is an organization intended to take care of the general welfare of the community. It should have a president, vice-president, secretary, and all the committees necessary to carry on its work effectively. The membership should include all the men of the community, and there is no reason why it should not also include the women. The club itself can determine what the membership fee shall be, or whether there shall be any fee.

The work of the Community Club should cover every phase of community welfare. This would include all school interests, road improvement, public health, improved methods of farming, promotion of industrial clubs, securing of markets for club products and for all other truck and farm products of the community, also means of social entertainment and improvement.

If organization and co-operation are worth-while for the town or city, they are equally as important for the country community, and the Community Club is springing into instant popularity wherever it is being introduced.

The simpler the plan of organization, the better the chance of success. There should be no red-tape, no secret signs and pass words, no mystery,—just plain, common sense mixed with earnestness and zeal for community uplift.

The Normal College is preparing a model working plan for a Community Club, including Constitution, By-laws, etc. A copy of this plan will be mailed to any one who applies for it.

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